REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Examiner's Final Office Action mailed March 8, 2007. Claims 1, 13, and 24-26 are cancelled, claims 2, 8, and 14 are amended, and claims 3, 16-17, and 22 have been withdrawn. Claims 2-12 and 14-23 remain pending in view of the above amendments.

Please note that the following remarks are not intended to be an exhaustive enumeration of the distinctions between any cited references and the claimed invention. Rather, the distinctions identified and discussed below are presented solely by way of example to illustrate some of the differences between the claimed invention and the cited references. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments to the claims and the following remarks. For the Examiner's convenience and reference, Applicant's remarks are presented in the order in which the corresponding issues were raised in the Office Action.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

The Office Action rejected claims 24-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph. Claims 24-26 have been cancelled, rendering the rejection moot. Applicant does not admit, however, that claims 24-26 are indefinite.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejected claims 2, 4, 6, 7-12, 14, 15, and 18-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Grasis* (U.S. Patent No. 6,198,857) in view of *Donaldson* (U.S. Patent No. 6,301,407). Applicants traverse the Examiner's rejection for obviousness on the grounds that the references – either individually or in combination – fail to teach or suggest each and every element of the rejected claims.

Embodiments of the invention are directed to a patch cord. As noted in the specification, an optical patch cord has the advantage of permitting optical network connections to be reconfigured quickly. By connecting the various fibers to different ports, the patch cord can connect ports of a patch panel in multiple configurations.

Claim 2 has been amended to clarify the patch aspect of the claim. Claim 2 is directed to a patch cord that can connect ports of a patch panel in multiple configurations while providing add/drop capability. For example, the input fiber requires a first connector that is permanently coupled to the casing and a second connector attached to an end of the input fiber. The drop fiber, add fiber, and output fiber similarly require a connector connected to their respective ends. These connectors allow the optical add/drop component to connect ports of a patch panel in multiple configurations.

These amendments to claim 2 clarify that the patch cord permits network connections to be reconfigured quickly by connecting with different ports. Advantageously, this reduces the physical space that is required by conventional components.

Grasis, in contrast, fails to teach or suggest these requirements of claim 2, particularly when considering the claim as a whole. *Grasis* teaches that the multiplexing device of Figure 3A is "coupled to a trunk line 46 of a fiber-optic telecommunication system." *See* col. 7, lls. 5-7. *Grasis* further teaches that the embodiment of Figure 4 is "optically coupled to trunk line 76 of the fiber-optic telecommunication system." *See* col. 9, lls. 48-49.

A module that is optically coupled to a trunk line fails to teach or suggest the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth connectors that are connected to the ends, respectfully, of the input fiber, drop fiber, add fiber, and output fiber. Further, there is no teaching of a patch cord with an optical add/drop module that includes connectors that enable the add/drop component to connect ports of a patch panel in multiple configurations. In other words, even if the add/drop multiplexing device of *Grasis* is optically coupled to a trunk line, there is no teaching of connectors that enable the optical add/drop component to connect ports of a patch panel in multiple configurations.

When considering the claim as a whole, claim 2 is directed to a patch cord that can connect ports of a patch panel in multiple configurations. *Grasis*, in contrast, only teaches a add/drop device that is optically connected to a trunk line of a fiber-optic telecommunication system. *Donaldson* has not been shown to remedy these deficiencies of *Grasis*.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 2 is patentable over the cited art. The independent claims 8 and 14 have been similarly amended and thus overcome the cited art for at least the same reasons. The pending dependent claims similarly overcome the cited art.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe the claims as amended are in allowable form. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, or which may be overcome by an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 8th day of August, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

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